

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

October 3, 2023

MINUTES

Present: Shawn Talbot (Chair), Jason Somero, Lou Alvarez, Debbie Deaton (Town Administrator)

5:00 Open Meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance

5:05 Round Table Discussion:

- Debbie said she has been working with the new software company going over the conversion, etc. and weeding out old accounts so we have a clean conversion. December is still the target date.
- NHMA Important Dates was given to the Board for SB2 towns. Shawn made a motion to hold the **Budget Hearing on 1/9/24 at 7pm at the Town Office with a snow date of 1/13/24 at 9am, to hold the Deliberative Session on 2/6/24 at 7pm at Mascenic High School Auditorium with a snow date of 2/10/24 at 9am and the voting will be on March 12, 2024 at the Mascenic Gym from 7am-7pm.** Lou seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- Shawn made a motion for Trick or Treating to be done on October 31st from 5pm to 7pm. Lou seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
- Lou reminded the Board they will be attending the Planning Board meeting tomorrow evening.
- **Warrant Articles for 2024:**
 - Debbie will check with the Road Committee on 11/1/23 to see if they would like to re-word Article #5 to match Article #4 which would include the word maintain.
 - There was some discussion regarding Article #6 (Capital Reserves) because a couple of residents asked if each fund could be separate instead of all of the funds in 1 article. It was suggested to have a yes/no box next to each fund. Debbie will contact the DRA to check on this.
 - Debbie will check with the DRA to see if using taxpayer dollars for donations to charities is legal per the discussion.
- Jason mentioned the Selectboard should conduct voluntary exit interviews with employees and the Board agreed. It was suggested to look at the employee handbook to see if it is in there. Debbie will mention this at the next staff meeting so Department Heads can inform employees.
- The Board would like monthly reports regarding Building Permits, fees collected and Code Enforcement issues. Debbie will ask Susan to compile the lists for the Board.

6:00 Old Beaver Road Discussion:

Present: John & Kathy Root, Dennis Howe, Roger Somero, Peter Somero

Shawn said the Board agreed to a 50/50 split when they had their non-public meeting regarding the legal advice they received. The residents' 50% will be in the form of a Betterment tax. Jason added this will be separate from the bi-annual tax bill. The frequency and length will be decided at the public hearing. Jason said the bill will be in the person's name, not the property. John said he thought the bill went with the property but whatever the Board decides is fine. He just wants all of the details ironed out prior to the public hearing so all of the residents have the same understanding. He wants to prevent any controversy at the Public Hearing. He will have a meeting with all of the homeowners' one on one to show them the process and cost prior to the hearing.

John added a lien would be placed on the property by the Town if the resident didn't pay the Betterment tax. Debbie said the cost can't be determined until the Paving Bid comes in next year. John said he would do calculations based on the low and high estimates we received for the paving.

Jason asked what the purpose of "wintering over" the base coat is. Peter replied it's a good gauge to see if there are any issues with the base. If there are, the DPW will address them prior to putting on the top coat. It's less expensive for the town that way because they would only have to rip up the base coat to do repairs. Roger asked why you can't wait 3 to 5 years to do the top coat. Shawn replied the State waits that long because they put a much thicker coat of base and top coat than the town does because the State roads are much heavier traveled.

John said it sounds like a 12-18 month process from when the road is accepted to when it's finished.

John said the fiscal year for the HOA ends in July. He would like to coincide the betterment with the fiscal year. Shawn said it sounds like that would work out because the work wouldn't start until August/September. Kathy said it would be convenient to send it out at the same time the July tax bill is sent out. Debbie said that could be accommodated.

Roger asked if this is going to set a precedent. Shawn said it is but each road will be taken on its own conditions. Shawn said there is another road out there that will have to pay 100% to get it up to town standards because their circumstances are totally different than this one. Shawn added the Old Beaver residents came before the Board to find an amicable resolution to accepting the road. Roger asked what would stop people from just putting the acceptance on a warrant article. It seems like a bunch of roads could be accepted by a warrant article instead of coming before the Selectmen. Shawn said that would not be in the Town's best interest because it would cost everyone.

Debbie said there are more controls in place now for new subdivisions. The builder won't receive Certificates of Occupancy and the bond won't be released if the road isn't up to Class V standards.

Jason asked Roger what he would do differently. Roger replied he would make sure the road that is up to the town specs. Jason said that's what we're doing now by making sure the controls are in place. Roger said he thinks more people will come in expecting a 50/50 split. Shawn said they could but each road will be taken on a case by case basis so it wouldn't necessarily be a 50/50 split.

Shawn made a motion to hold the Public Hearing on October 24th at 7:00pm to discuss the terms of acceptance. Jason seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. Debbie will put a public notice in the Monadnock Ledger.

6:50 Comcast-Broadband Initiative:

Debbie explained to the Board Monica from Comcast had come in and requested this motion be made so there is approval for Comcast to fill out the application for aid. There was some discussion regarding the locations in town that didn't have broadband available and the letters that were sent out to those residents. Shawn asked how many residents responded to the letters. Debbie replied 4 residents responded in the affirmative but there had been more addresses added since the last list we received.

Lou made the following motion:

The Town of New Ipswich makes a motion to endorse the application of Comcast Cable Communications, LLC ("Comcast") to the New Hampshire Broadband Matching Grant Initiative ("BMGI") to provide broadband service to unserved locations in New Ipswich.

Whereas, the Town of New Ipswich finds Comcast to be technically, managerial and financially capable of meeting the obligations of the BMGI fund request;

Whereas, Comcast has the operational capacity and experience to extend its network to additional locations;

The Town of New Ipswich hereby votes to select Comcast as the agreed upon BMGI provider.

Jason seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

7:03 Jim Coffey:

Jim asked if Wilson Hill Road will be paved this year. Debbie replied it will be paved next year because there aren't enough funds to do it this year.

Jim said he had received the letter from the Board regarding his complaint about 445 Turnpike Road. He added the letter didn't respond to his complaint, it described everything that has been investigated by the

Code Enforcement officer and he wasn't looking for that information. He was asking the Board to enforce the Zoning Ordinance by sending the resident to the Zoning Board for a Special Exception. Shawn replied the Board is sending the resident to the ZBA because they are the experts on this.

Shawn said the resident will be at the ZBA meeting on Thursday evening. If he doesn't show up, we will be having a different discussion.

Jim said there are also a few other residences in town that seem to be running businesses from their property.

Shawn said they can be reported to the Code Enforcement officer if he chooses.

7:15 Keene Hazardous Waste:

Shawn said we are not on the list at the Keene Hazardous Waste facility. Debbie had filled out the form but apparently didn't email it to them in January. Shawn asked if there was something we could do at the Transfer Station and bring it to them. Debbie will look into this as well as find out if we can be added to the list for the spring.

Lou said it sounds like no one has gone to Keene this year if we're just hearing about it now and wondered if it was worth paying them for very few people to go there.

At 7:25, Shawn made a motion to adjourn. Jason seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Deaton
Town Administrator

Minutes approved by BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Shawn Talbot, Chairman: _____

Jason Somero: _____

Lou Alvarez: _____

